

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 IO-13

SSM-03 OMB-01 SAM-01 AGR-05 CU-02 SCCT-01 /083 W

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R 241146Z AUG 76

FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2771

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

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SUBJECT: THE "OPEN FENCE" POLICY CONTINUES

REF: TEL AIVV 5163, TEL AVIV 5266, TEL AVIV 5353,
TEL AVIV 5495

1. THE OPEN FENCE POLICY ALONG THE ISRAELI-LEBANESE
BORDER, WHICH HAD BEEN INITIALLY CONCEIVED
AS AD HOC HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE PROVIDING
EMERGENCY MEDICAL CARE AND URGENTLY NEEDED SUPPLIES
AND SERVICES, IS NOW EXPANDING INTO A WELL-COORDINATED
POLICY WHICH APPEARS TO BE DESIGNED TO ESTABLISH MORE
PERMANENT ECONOMIC, COMMUNICATIONS, AND EVEN PERSONAL
AND FAMILY LINKS WITH THE SOUTHERN LEBANESE AREA.

2. THE TEMPORARY EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM WHICH STARTED ON
AUGUST 1 HAS ALREADY GROWN TO OVER 200 LEBANESE
THUS EMPLOYED. A TEMPORARY POST OFFICE HAS BEEN ESTABLISHED
AT DEVOV TO HANDLE THE FLOW OF INTERNATIONAL MAIL

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TO AND FROM LEBANESE AREAS. LEBANESE ARE NOW SELECTIVELY

PERMITTED TO CROSS INTO ISRAW TO USE THE LOD AIRPORT,
AND A GROWING NUMBER OF FAMILIES FROM LEBANON HAVE BEEN
ADMITTED TO VISIT RELATIVES IN ISRAEL.

3. SMALL BUT INCREASING QUANTITIES OF LEBANESE PRODUCE ARE BEING
SHIPPED ACROSS THE FRONTIER EITHER FOR LOCAL ISRAELI
CONSUMPTION OR RE-EXPORT THROUGH ISRAELI POSTS. IN
ADDITION THE ISRAELI MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE HAS ESTAB-
LISHED PROCEDURES FOR GIVING TEMPORARY AGRICULTURAL
TRAINING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO SOUTH LEBANESE
FARMERS. THE ISRAELIS ARE ALSO MAKING AVAILABLE WATER,
SEEDS, FERTILIZER, PESTICIDES, AND EVEN VETERINARY
SERVICES.

4. FOREIGN MINISTER ALLON TOLD VISITING CONGRESSMAN
MIKVA ON AUGUST 19 THAT ISRAEL IS PREPARED TO OFFER
APPROXIMATELY 200 LEBANESE STUDENTS AN OPPORTUNITY TO
RESUME THEIR INTERRUPTED STUDIES AT HAIFA AND HEBREW
UNIVERSITIES, BOTH OF WHICH HAVE SUBSTANTIAL ARAB
STUDY PROGRAMS.

5. IN A TALK TO A LABOR PARTY MEETING AUGUST 22 DEFENSE
MINISTER PERES SAID "THERE IS AN INTERNATIONALLY RECOG-
NIZED BORDER BETWEEN LEBANON AND ISRAEL AND THERE
IS NO NEED TO CHANGE THAT BORDER." PERES SAID THAT THE
RIGHT PATH FOR ISRAEL IS NOT TO SEIZE TERRITORIES BUT TO
ESTABLISH A RELATIONSHIP WITH THE VILLAGES IN SOUTHERN
LEBANON. HE SAID THAT 6,000 PEOPLE HAVE THUS FAR RE-
CEIVED MEDICAL TREATMENT ALONG THE BORDER AND THAT MORE
THAN 500 HAVE RECEIVED HOSPITALIZATION. HE STRESSED THAT
ISRAEL'S ACTIVITIES ARE NO THREAT TO SYRIA AND THAT
SYRIAN FORCES ARE 25 KMS. FROM THE BORDER. (SEE FBIS
TA 222118 Y)

6. COMMENT: WITH THE RAPID EXPANSION OF THE "OPEN
FENCE" PROGRAM, THE ISRAELI AUTHORITIES HAVE BECOME IN-
CREASINGLY AWARE OF ITS VULNERABILITY TO TERRORIST IN-
TERFERENCE. AS A RESULT, THE IDF HAS TAKEN EXTENSIVE
SECURITY PRECAUTIONS AT THE BORDER CROSSINGS? IT KEEPS
THE ACCESS AREAS ON BOTH SIDES OF THE BORDER UNDER CLOSE
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SURVEILLANCE. THERE HAVE BEEN SPORADIC REPORTS OF INTIMIDATION
EFFORTS AGAINST SOME OF THE LEBANESE SEEKING TO BENEFIT FROM
THE PROGRAM. HOWEVER, SO FAR THE ISRAELIS HAVE PUBLI-
CIZED ONLY TWO RELATIVELY MINOR INCIDENTS -- AN EXPLO-
SION NEAR THE BORDER CROSSING AT DOVEV AND AN INCENDIARY
ATTACK AGAINST OLIVE GROVES OF COOPERATING VILLAGES
NEAR THE BORDER. THE NUMBER OF LEBANESE WILLING TO TAKE
ADVANTAGE OF THE OPEN BORDER AND THE SMALL NUMBER OF REPORTED

INCIDENTS APPEAR TO INDICATE THAT INTIMIDATION HAS NOT
BEEN SUCCESSFUL.
TOON

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